

CHAPTER II:

Goals & Objectives

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Goals for the Development of Smithfield

In updating the 1992 Plan, the new Comprehensive Plan has been designed to be a guide for the physical development of Smithfield into the first decade of the new century. The Plan addresses the entire Town, including the land annexed by Smithfield from Isle of Wight County on January 1, 1998, and is intended to positively influence all of the physical elements which make up its urban form. Towards this end, the overriding purpose of the "Plan for the New Century" is to encourage the continued development of a safe and healthy community by offering a distinctive "vision" for the continued growth of Smithfield. Many factors will affect the new ideas and decisions which will mold the optimal course of action for the Town. The Plan focuses on those particular areas which the Town, through its leadership in urban planning and growth management, can and should have a progressive impact towards defining what is in the best public interest.

By preparing a future land use plan which is integrally tied to its precedent goals, objectives and planning policies, the old adage that "a locality can be no better than its aspires to be" is underscored. An intelligent and comprehensible plan cannot be structured without energetically seeking and taking the necessary steps to define the common components of the locality's vision for its future. The first steps taken towards establishing the fruits of the planning process were (1) to define future goals, (2) to translate those goals into objectives by which they would be realized and (3) to establish policies and strategies to implement the goals for the betterment of the community. This effort is a progression in which "goals begat objectives which begat policies which begat actions."

In arriving at the following set of goals and objectives for the 1999 Comprehensive Plan, three distinct efforts were undertaken in order to ensure that the planning process proceeded on a rational path with the assurance that adopted future land use recommendations would be founded on firm social, economic, moral and legal underpinnings.

The initial effort in this regard was to undertake a thorough review and analysis of all previous Town plans, ordinances and growth management documents. By carefully evaluating goals and objectives from the 1992 Plan as well as earlier plans, the Planning Commission was able to effectively assess the "suitability" and "workability" of past planning strategies in the context of what is most appropriate for the Town during the updating of its "Plan for the New Century." In doing so, past planning goals could be updated, refined and merged into the context of the current Plan's study requirements.

Secondly, the planning process was designed to incorporate a range of citizen input and public participation opportunities which enabled all interested parties to express their visions and expectations for the future of the community. Town planners believe that the development of an effective Plan must have the participation, support and understanding of its constituencies. Without the public's active involvement in arriving at the community "vision," the acceptance of individual elements of the Plan, ultimately, will likely be blindsided by the very same public. Thus, a number of public work sessions were

conducted during which interested citizens were afforded the opportunity to offer valuable input into the planning process. Furthermore, the Town distributed a survey which allowed Town residents to respond to specific questions relating to “hot button” land use issues, as well as to provide their “vision” for the future of Smithfield. The Town received an overwhelming 35% response rate for this survey. The consolidated findings of the survey responses and the public comments received during public work sessions were used by the Planning Commission in establishing the final goals and objectives for this Plan. This effort was coordinated with the planning efforts of adjoining jurisdictions, and was sensitive to regional land use goals, objectives and implementation strategies.

Thirdly, the Planning Commission, Town Staff and the Consultant maintained a constant goals-oriented “vigil” during the development of the land use planning and growth management recommendations for the community. In doing so, they were able to maintain a high level of leadership and objective focus as the many “nuts and bolts” aspects of this Comprehensive Plan were being developed and as numerous land use alternatives were evaluated. The result of this thorough goals-directed planning effort yielded a more consistent land use planning program and a more efficient framework for the growth management program for the Town.

The Town’s range of goals-setting influence can be grouped into eight general categories:

- (1) ***Community Development,***
- (2) ***Economic Development,***
- (3) ***Housing,***
- (4) ***Historic Preservation,***
- (5) ***Land Use,***
- (6) ***Public Services***
- (7) ***Transportation and Parking,***
- (8) ***Environment***

Within each of these areas, the following goals and objectives will serve to have a recognizable effect on the quality of future development.

I. Community Development

Major Goal Statement:

Protect and enhance both existing and future development in Smithfield through pro-active growth management programs and progressive community design guidelines.

Planning Objectives and Policies:

- A. Protect and enhance the unique qualities of Smithfield's small town atmosphere, as well as its sense of history and place.
- B. Promote development opportunities which respect, preserve and protect the Town's ambience, historic properties, waterfront areas and sensitive environmental areas.
- C. Reduce structural decay of buildings throughout the Town by strengthening planning, zoning and building code enforcement.
- D. Support the continued use of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) programs and funding sources as a means of revitalizing threatened neighborhoods and commercial areas.
- E. Ensure the high quality of future development in the Town by enacting creative urban design standards and implementation procedures.
- F. Emphasize strict adherence to well-coordinated urban design themes as well as the organized phasing of adequate public infrastructure to support the Town's remaining undeveloped parcels.
- G. Encourage and promote community development by encouraging the organization and/or continued activity of proactive and self-sufficient neighborhood groups.
- H. Encourage continued streetscape and pedestrian improvements throughout the Town.

II. Economic Development

Major Goal Statement:

Expand the Town's existing economic base by exploring economic development opportunities in the areas of tourism, retail commercial and industry in order to strengthen the existing economy and generate revenue and employment opportunities.

Planning Objectives and Policies:

- A. Encourage tourist related retail and service development in appropriate areas in order to diversify the Town's economic base.
- B. Identify areas suitable for new economic development or the expansion of existing local operations, with an emphasis on long-term planning opportunities for light industrial facilities.
- C. Work with existing businesses and property owners to ensure the continued viability of the Town's existing commercial area.
- D. Identify areas suitable for redevelopment, particularly along South Church Street and develop specific strategies on a site-by-site basis to encourage such redevelopment.
- E. Identify business linkage opportunities within the existing marketplace, and actively promote the Town of Smithfield as an ideal location for the future location of firms and industries that could properly take advantage of these opportunities.
- F. Identify sectors within the local retail marketplace in which local spending is "leaking" to surrounding localities, and actively promote the development of new and specialty retailers to take advantage of market niche opportunities.

III. Housing

Major Goal Statement:

Provide for a wide variety of housing options for all Smithfield residents with an emphasis on quality site planning in future residential development areas.

Planning Objectives and Policies

- A. Adopt a pro-active housing program which targets and promotes opportunities for the improvement of substandard dwellings.
- B. Identify threatened neighborhoods and reverse their decline by proactive enforcement of building codes and focusing rehabilitation efforts in these areas.
- C. Encourage the development of nursing homes, adult care centers, assisted living facilities and other housing types which provide amenities that are attractive to retirees.
- D. Identify and promote new development opportunities for single family detached residential units.
- E. Recognize the disproportionate allocation of multi-family housing within the Town and limit future development within this sector of the housing market.
- F. Promote the implementation of new zoning districts providing for a range of single family detached and attached housing opportunities.

IV. Historic Preservation

Major Goal Statement:

Preserve and protect the Town's rich architectural and cultural heritage which positively impacts tourism and contributes to the overall well-being of the community.

Planning Objectives and Policies:

- A. Preserve the integrity of the architectural and historic character of Smithfield by protecting historic buildings and neighborhoods from inappropriate uses.
- B. Encourage the appropriate adaptive reuse of both publicly and privately owned historically significant structures in the Town.
- C. Guide contemporary development in a way which compliments the historic fabric of the Town and works to strengthen the overall character of the community.
- D. Update and expand the inventory of privately held historic properties of significance and develop strategies for their protection.
- E. Encourage the continuation of the ongoing revitalization activities along the South Church Street corridor.

V. Land Use

Major Goal Statement:

Plan for a balanced mix of residential, commercial and economic development uses which will accommodate the projected demands for housing, shopping and tourism, as well as promote new employment opportunities for present and future residents.

Planning Objectives and Policies:

- A. Identify and promote new development and infill opportunities on vacant or underutilized properties which are compatible with existing neighborhoods.
- B. Develop and implement initiatives and procedures to encourage development in target areas identified as having the strongest urban development potentials.
- C. Develop and implement procedures which will result in the conservation of environmentally sensitive land areas impacted by new development and redevelopment activities.
- D. Designate suitable areas for commercial, office and economic development uses to provide sufficient tax revenues to balance the cost of providing services for future residential growth.

- E. Cooperate with Isle of Wight County to integrate their land use planning and economic development efforts with the Town Plan.
- F. Ensure that new development will be adequately supported by existing or planned public services and infrastructure.
- G. Undertake detailed studies of newly annexed areas to determine their most appropriate land use potentials.
- H. Promote the ongoing effort by private, non-profit housing groups to redevelop and improve deteriorating housing stock, and encourage more groups to participate in this initiative.
- I. Implement creative growth management techniques and design guidelines which foster suitable new and redevelopment activities.

VI. Public Services

Major Goal Statement:

Provide adequate levels of public services to all the people in the Town, recognizing that the regional aspects of certain facilities and services necessitate regional planning and inter-jurisdictional cooperation.

Planning Objectives and Policies:

- A. Continue long range master planning for the determination of the most effective timing and routing of public utility system extensions.
- B. Coordinate future water and sewer requirements with regional service authorities.
- C. Cooperate with adjacent jurisdictions in advancing planning and implementation programs for raw water supply sources to serve the long-range municipal water supply requirements for the Town of Smithfield.
- D. Develop a comprehensive Stormwater Management Plan and Best Management Practices (BMPs) design manual which addresses local stormwater management and stormwater drainage issues and ensures that all future development includes adequate and sufficient stormwater management controls.

- E. Plan for and maintain public buildings to serve the needs of the community.
- F. Explore options for the relocation of the Post Office and Town Hall with the realization of the importance that both facilities have for the future of Downtown Smithfield.
- G. Enhance and expand facilities and systems for police, fire and judicial operations which protect and serve Town residents and visitors.
- H. Identify areas of Town with insufficient street lighting which may contribute to an unsafe environment. Make specific recommendations to enhance lighting in these areas.
- I. Maintain the cooperative public education system with Isle of Wight County with a shared goal of providing superior educational opportunities for all children.
- J. Increase utilization of the Paul D. Camp Community College and promote other local continuing education and vocational opportunities.
- K. Expand and enhance the Town's system of parks and open space to provide recreation, while preserving scenic vistas, natural areas and historic sites.
- L. Identify and secure waterfront property to provide public access to the Pagan River for recreational opportunities.
- M. Encourage new residential developments to provide sufficient open space and neighborhood parks.

VII. Transportation and Parking

Major Goal Statement:

The location, character and capacity of Smithfield's transportation facilities (including thoroughfares, local streets and parking) should be compatible with the Future Land Use Plan. Planning for future road and street improvements and alignments should be compatible with emerging land uses, and should provide adequate capacities to serve future growth.

Planning Objectives and Policies:

- A. Implement street improvements which are of the appropriate scale and capacity to serve long-range traffic demands, while respecting the environment and scale of the surrounding neighborhood.
- B. Maintain the integrity of Downtown Smithfield by implementing four-way stops, traffic calming strategies, and other traffic safety measures to minimize the impact of traffic in the historic area.
- C. Increase parking capacity in the downtown area by providing for new and/or expanded public parking facilities. Undertake a study leading to a consolidated downtown parking plan.
- D. Discourage the development of private road systems within single-family residential subdivisions.
- E. Establish and reserve new public street alignments and adequate rights of way in future development areas; establish strategies for transportation implementation and phasing in conjunction with the development of properties.
- F. Examine the existing sidewalk system in established neighborhoods and study the feasibility of adding sidewalks to these areas.
- G. Study the possibility of linking a bike trail in Smithfield to the regional bicycle trail system.
- H. Incorporate expanded standards into a Design and Construction Manual for road and drainage improvements.

VIII. Environment

Major Goal Statement:

Enhance and protect the ambiance and natural setting of Smithfield while promoting a greater awareness of the natural beauty and positive attributes of the Town.

Planning Objectives and Policies:

- A. Promote the conservation of open space within the Town boundary and actively promote the long-term preservation and maintenance of valuable natural resource areas through public acquisition, private dedication of easements and other cooperative efforts.
- B. Identify environmentally sensitive areas within the Town and implement innovative growth management procedures which promote design sensitivity to the environment at a site-specific level.
- C. Protect the quality and reliability of the regional aquifer by ensuring judicious use of groundwater supplies.
- D. Ensure that future development meets the standards of the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act and respects the designated Chesapeake Bay preservation areas.
- E. Coordinate environmental preservation efforts with neighboring jurisdictions, and establish an action plan targeting environmental concerns that require a regional approach.